



Lenin and the GOELRO Plan, by Pavel Filonov

# Development Is Ours

*Introduction to a 10-part Course: “Development, Rural and Urban”*

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## Some Relevant Quotations on “Development”

*The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.*

**Marx/Engels, Communist Manifesto, 1848**

*Communism = Soviet Power + Electrification*

**V I Lenin, 1921**

*What we want is to combine in our process of inquiry the action of the forms of thought with a criticism of them. The forms of thought must be studied in their essential nature and complete **development**: they are at once the object of research and the action of that object. This is Dialectic, instead of being brought to bear upon the categories from without, it is immanent in their own action.*

**G W F Hegel, Shorter Logic (1830)**

*“When I use a word, Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less.”*

*“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you can make words mean so many different things.”*

*“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be master, that’s all.”*

**Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking-Glass, 1871**

*“The free development of each is the condition for the free development of all”*

**Marx/Engels, Communist Manifesto, 1848**

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## **Development**

“Development”, like many other powerful words, including “Freedom” and “Democracy”, had a meaning in revolutionary philosophy long before it had a vulgar bourgeois economists’ meaning.

Part of the purpose of our studies is therefore always, and with deliberation, to reclaim the political language that our revolutionary predecessors pioneered and left to us, and to take it back from the bourgeois demagogues who constantly try to steal it.

Development is the interior unfolding of a unitary phenomenon or system, propelled by the struggle of opposites within it. Development is the essence of dialectics. It is dialectics in motion. It is the essence of change. This revolutionary meaning of the word “development” is the only one that has a clear definition and an intentional purpose. It means the development of people.

The vulgar economists’ definition of the word “development” is a vague gesture in the direction of more infrastructure, lowering the cost of doing business, a higher GDP, and other such “indicators” or presumed generally-beneficial goods expediently selected to suit the occasion. In the US slang, it is “motherhood and apple pie”.

On grander occasions, the brandished indicators may be an internationally-endorsed set of arbitrary “development goals”, which, though globally celebrated, nevertheless fail to rise above the *ad hoc* and the eclectic, because they continue to evade the dialectical meaning of “development”.

The obfuscation of the word “development” is as deliberate as our attempts to clarify it. This is because in actual human society, development is class struggle, with winners and

losers. There is no such thing as a “win-win” class struggle. There is no such thing as a “tide that lifts all the boats”. Some of the boats are tied to the bottom.

Bourgeois economists, and Imperialism generally, although it has manifestly failed worldwide to employ even half of the people and to provide for them adequately, are obliged to pretend that there can be such a thing as generally-beneficial development that does not challenge the capitalist system.

Hence they have stolen our word and hidden its true meaning, in an attempt to deceive us. We must take it back.

The picture is [Filonov](#)’s representation of Lenin and the ground-breaking “[GOELRO](#)” plan that included the electrification of the Soviet Union.

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